

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

ACDA-10 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 EB-07 CU-04 STR-04 OIC-02

BIB-01 (ISO) W

----- 096633

R 171013Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 997

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS BERN 2957

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CSCE, PFOR, XG, PARM, EGEN, EEWT, SGEN

SUBJ: SWISS PRESS ON CSCE

1. SWISS PRESS GREETED PRESUMED VIRTUAL END OF CSCE PHASE TWO CAUTIOUSLY AND WITH MUCH SOBER REFLECTION. TYPICAL REACTIONS WERE ALONG LINES THAT THE "PROOF OF THE PUDDING WOULD BE IN THE EATING", AND THE WIDESPREAD ASSUMPTION THAT WHILE CSCE HAD NOT DONE MUCH GOOD, NEITHER HAD IT DONE ANY HARM. THERE WAS NOT EVEN THE HINT OF EUPHORIA IN ANY OF THE COMMENTS SPANNING THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM.

2. THE NEUE ZURCHER ZEITUNG STRUCK A COMMON NOTE IN STRESSING THAT THE LABORIOUSLY ARRIVED AT CONFERENCE COMPROMISES REPRESENT ONLY DECLARATIONS OF INTENTIONS LACKING ANY KIND OF OBLIGATORY ENFORCEMENT UNDER LAW. SKEPTICALLY THE NZZ EDITORIAL HELD THAT THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT SOUNDS HOLLOW SINCE IT SEEMS TO ASSUME THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TOTALITARIANISM AND THE PLURALISM OF THE WEST CAN BE BRIDGED. TRIBUNE DE GENEVE, IN A SIMILAR VEIN, ADDED THAT GUARANTEES SUCH AS

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION CAN ALWAYS BE MADE INOPERATIVE BY

"REASONS OF SECURITY". TO WHICH THE BASLE NATIONAL ZEITUNG ADDED THAT THE CONFERENCE RESULTS APPROXIMATE THE CURRENT POLITICAL REALITIES AND REFLECT THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR REQUIRED BY CONSENSUS PROCEEDINGS.

3. ALMOST ALL PAPERS NOTED THAT THE CSCE HAS LONG BEEN A SOVIET GOAL, A SUBSTITUTE FOR A PEACE CONFERENCE. HOWEVER, THE BASLER NACHRICHTEN WAS ONE OF SEVERAL PAPERS DECLARING THAT THE SOVIETS WERE IN ERROR IF THEY HOPED THE CONFERENCE WOULD LOOSEN THE WESTERN ALLIANCE. NATO AND THE EC WITHSTOOD THE TESTS TO THEIR SOLIDARITY "USUALLY IN COMMON WITH THE EUROPEAN NEUTRALS, INCLUDING SWITZERLAND".

4. THE SWISS EXERCISE IN "POSITIVE NEUTRALITY" AT THE CONFERENCE WAS GENERALLY APPLAUDED. THE PRESS THOUGHT THAT SWITZERLAND MADE A WORTHWHILE CONTRIBUTION, ESPECIALLY IN PUSHING FOR ITS ARBITRATION PROPOSAL. WHILE, AS EXPECTED, THE PROPOSAL COULD NOT BE ADOPTED, THE SWISS THOUGHT IT A PLUS THAT THE CONFERENCE AGREED TO GIVE IT FURTHER CONSIDERATION AND WAS NOT SIMPLY FOBBED OFF AS-UTOPIAN.ODELL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, PRESS COMMENTS, POLICIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BERN02957
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750247-0585
From: BERN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750744/aaaabncu.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 FEB 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 FEB 2003 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <22 MAR 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWISS PRESS ON CSCE
TAGS: PFOR, PARM, EGEN, EEWT, SGEM, XG, CSCE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006